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2

A SATYRE:

DEDICATED
TO HIS MOST
EXCELLENT
MAIESTIE.

BY
GEORGE VVITHER,
Gentleman.

Rebus in aduerſis Creſcit.

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THE SATYRE TO THE MEERE COVRTIERS.

SIrs, I doe know your mindes, you looke for fees,
For more reſpect then needes, for caps and knees:
But be content, I haue not for you now,
Nor will I haue at all to doe with you.
For though I ſeeme oppreſt, and you ſuppoſe
I muſt be faine to crouch to Vertues *foes;*
Yet know, your fauours I doe now ſleight more
In this diſtreſſe, then ere I did before.

A Satyre.

Here to my Leige a meſſage I muſt tell,
If you will let me paſſe you ſhall doe well;
If you denie admittance, why then know,
I meane to haue it where you will or no.
Your formall wiſdome, which hath neuer beene
In ought yet (ſaue inuenting faſhions) ſeene,
And deemes that man was borne to no entent,
But to be train'd in Apiſh complement;
Doth now (perhaps) ſuppoſe me indiſcreet,
And ſuch vnuſed meſſages vnmeet.
But what of that? Shall I goe ſute my matter
Vnto your wits that haue but wit to flatter?

Shall

A Satyre.

Shall I, of your opinions ſo much prize
To looſe my will to haue you *thinke me wiſe,*
Who neuer yet to any liking had,
Vnleſſe he were a Knaue *a* Foole, *or* mad?
You Muſhromes *know, ſo much I weigh your powers,*
I neither value you, *nor what is yours.*
Nay, though my croſſes had me quite out-worne,
Spirit enough I'de *finde your ſpight to ſcorne:*
Of which reſolu'd to further my aduenter,
Vnto my KING *without your leaues I enter.*

TO

TO THE HONEST COVRTIERS.

BVt You, *whoſe onely worth doth colour giue*
To Them, *that they doe worthy ſeeme to liue,*
Kinde Gentlemen, *your ayde I craue to bring*
A SATYRE *to the preſence of his King:*
A ſhow of rudeneſſe doth my fore-head arme,
Yet you may truſt me, I will doe no harme:
He that hath ſent me, is a ſubiect true,
And one whoſe loue (I know) is much to you:
But now he lyes bound to a narrow ſcope,
Almoſt beyond the Cape of all good hope.

Long

Long hath he ſought to free himſelfe, but fayles:
And therefore ſeeing nothing elſe preuailes,
Me, *to acquaint my* Soueraigne, *here he ſends,*
As one deſpayring of all other friends.
I doe preſume that you will fauour ſhow me,
Now that a Meſſenger from him you know me:
For many thouſands that his face ne're knew
Blame his Accuſers, and his Fortune *rue:*
And by the helpe which your good word may doe,
He hopes for pitty from his Soueraigne *to.*
Then in his *preſence with your fauours grace me,*
And there's no Vice *ſo great, ſhall dare out-face me.*

TO

TO THE KINGS MOST EXCELLENT *MAIESTIE.*

A Satyre.

Quid tu, ſi pereo?

VVHat once the POET ſaid, I may auow,
'Tis a hard thing not to write Satyres now,
Since what wee ſpeake, abuſe raignes ſo in all,
Spight of our hearts will be *Satyricall.*

Let

A Satyre.

Let it not therefore now be deemed ſtrange,
My vnſmooth'd lines their rudeneſſe do not change,
Nor be diſtaſtfull to my gracious *King*,
That in the *Cage*, my old harſh notes I ſing,
And rudely make a *Satyre* here vnfold,
What others would in neater tearmes haue told.
And why? my friends and meanes in *Court* are ſcant,
Knowledge of curious phraſe, and forme I want.
I cannot bear't to runne my ſelfe in debt,
To hire the *Groome* to bid the *Page* entreat
Some *fauour'd Follower* to vouchſafe his word
To get me a cold comfort from his *Lord*,

A Satyre.

I cannot ſooth, though it my life might ſaue,
Each *Fauourite*, nor crouch to euery *Knaue*,
I cannot brooke delayes as ſome men doe,
With ſcoffes and ſcornes, and tak't in kindneſſe to.
For ere I'de binde my ſelfe for ſome fleight grace
To one that hath no more worth then his *place*,
Or by a *baſe meane* free my ſelfe from trouble,
I rather would endure my penance double:
Cauſe to be forc'd to what my minde diſdaynes
Is worſe to mee then *tortures*, *racks*, and *chaines*:
And therefore vnto *thee* I onely flye,
To whom there needes no meane but *Honeſty*:

To

To *thee* that lou'ſt nor *Paraſite* or *Minion*,
Should ere I ſpeake poſſeſſe thee with opinion,
To *thee* that do'ſt what thou wilt vndertake,
For loue of *Iuſtice*, not the *perſons* ſake.
To *thee* that know'ſt how vaine all faire ſhewes be,
That flow not from the hearts ſinceritie.
And canſt, though ſhadowed in the ſimpleſt vaile,
Diſcerne both *Loue* and *Truth*, and where they faile:
To *thee* doe I appeale, in whom Heau'n knowes,
I next to God my confidence repoſe.
For, can it be thy Grace ſhould euer ſhine,
And not enlighten ſuch a cauſe as mine?

Can

Can my hopes (fixt in thee great KING) be dead,
Or thou those *Satyres* haue thy *Forrests* bred?
Where shall my second hopes be founded then,
If euer I haue heart to hope agen?
Can I suppose a fauour may be got
In any place, when thy *Court* yeelds it not?
Or, that I may obtaine it in the land,
When I shall be deni'd it at thy hand?
And if I might; should I so fond con't be,
To tak't of others, when I miss't of thee?
Or if I did, can I haue comfort by it,
When I shall thinke my *Soueraigne* did deny it?

No

No, were I ſure, I to thy hate were borne,
The loue of halfe the world beſide I'de ſcorne.
But why ſhould I thy fauour here diſtruſt,
That haue a *cauſe* ſo knowne, and knowne ſo iuſt?
Which not alone my inward comfort doubles,
But all ſuppoſe me wrong'd that heare my troubles.
Nay, though my fault were Reall, I beleeue
Thou art ſo Royall, that thou wouldſt forgiue.
For well I know thy ſacred *Maieſty*
Hath euer beene admir'd for Clemencie,
And at thy gentlenes the world hath wondred,
For making Sunſhine, where thou might'ſt haue thun-(dred.

Yea, thou in mercy life to them didſt giue
That could not be content to ſee *thee* liue.
And can I thinke that thou wilt make me, then,
The moſt vnhappy of all other men ?
Or let thy loyall ſubiect, againſt reaſon,
Be puniſht more for *Loue*, then ſome for *Treaſon*?
No, thou didſt neuer yet thy glory ſtaine
With an iniuſtice to the meaneſt *Swaine*.
'Tis not thy will I'me wrong'd, nor doſt thou know,
If I haue ſuffred iniuries of no.
For if I haue not heard falſe *Rumours* flye,
Th'aſt grac'd mee with the ſtile of *Honeſty*.

And

And if it were so (as the world thinkes 'twas)
I cannot see how it should come to passe
That *thou*, from whose free *tongue* proceedeth nought
Which is not correspondent with thy thought.
Those thoughts to, being fram'd in *Reasons* mould,
Should speake that once, which should not euer hold.
But passing it as an vncertaintie,
I humbly begge thee, by that *Maiestie*
Whose sacred *Glory* strikes a louing-feare
Into the hearts of all, to whom 'tis deare:
To deigne me so much fauour, without merit,
As read this plaint of a distempred spirit

And thinke, vnleſſe I ſaw ſome hideous ſtorme,
Too great to be endur'd by ſuch a *worme*,
I had not thus preſum'd vnto a *King*,
With *Æſops Fly* to ſeeke an *Eagles* wing.
But know I'me hee that entred once the liſt,
'Gainſt all the world to play the *Satyriſt*:
'Twas I, that made my meaſures rough and rude,
Dance arm'd with whips amidſt the multitude,
And vnappalled with my charmed *Scrowles*,
Teaz'd angry *Monſters* in their lurking holes:
I'ue plaid with *Waſps*, and *Hornets* without feares,
Till they grew mad, and ſwarm'd about my eares.

I'ue done it, and me thinkes 'tis ſuch braue ſport,
I may be ſtung, but ne're be ſorry for't.
For all my griefe is that I was ſo ſparing,
And had no more in't worth the name of daring.
Hee that will taxe theſe times muſt be more bitter,
Tart lines of *Vinegar* and *Gall* are fitter.
My fingers and my ſpirits were benum'd,
My *Inck* ran forth too ſmooth, 'twas too much gum'd,
I'de haue my *Pen* ſo paint it, where it traces,
Each accent, ſhould draw bloud into their faces.
And make them, when their *Villanies* are blazed.
Shudder and *ſtartle*, as men halfe amazed.

For feare my *Verſe* ſhould make ſo loud a din,
Heauen hearing might raine vengeance on their ſin.
Oh now for ſuch a ſtraine! would *Art* could teach it;
Though halfe my ſpirits I conſum'd to reach it.
I'de learne my *Muſe* ſo braue a courſe to flye,
Men ſhould admire the power of *Poeſie*,
And thoſe that dar'd her greatneſſe to reſiſt,
Quake, euen at naming of a *Satyriſt*.
But when his ſcourging numbers flow'd with wonder,
Should cry, *God bleſſe vs*, as they did at thunder.
Alas! my lines came from me too, too dully,
They did not fill a *Satyres* mouth vp fully.

A Satyre.

Hot bloud, and youth, enrag'd with paſſions ſtore,
Taught me to reach a *ſtraine* ne're touch'd before.
But it was coldly done, I throughly chid not:
And ſomewhat there is yet to doe, I did not.
More ſoundly could my *ſcourge* haue yerked many,
Which I omitted not for feare of any.
For *want of action, diſcontentments rage,*
Baſe *diſ-reſpect of Vertue* (in this age)
With other things, vnto my ſelfe a wrong,
Made me ſo ſcare-leſſe in my care-leſſe ſong:
That had not reaſon within compaſſe-wombe me,
I had told *Truth* enough to haue vndone me:

(Nay, haue already, if that her Diuine
And vnſeene power, can doe no more then mine.)
For though fore ſeeing warineſſe was good,
I fram'd my ſtile vnto a milder mood,
And clogging her high-towring wings with mire,
Made her halfe earth, that was before all fire.
Then being (as you ſaw) diſguis'd in ſhew,
Clad like a *Satyre*, brought her forth to view:
Hoping, (her out-ſide being miſ-eſteem'd)
She might haue paſſed, but for what ſhe ſeem'd:
Yet *ſome*, whoſe *Comments* iumpe not with my minde
In that low phraſe, a higher reach would finde,

And

And out of their deepe iudgements ſeeme to know,
What 'tis vncertaine if I meant or no:
Ayming thereby, out of ſome priuate hate,
To worke my ſhame, or ouerthrow my ſtate,
For amongſt many wrongs my *foe* doth doe me,
And diuers imputations laid vnto me,
Deceiued in his ayme, hee doth miſ-conſter
That which I haue enſtil'd a *Man-like Monſter*,
To meane ſome priuate perſon in the State,
Whoſe worth I ſought to wrong out of my hate;
Vpbrayding *me*, I from my word doe ſtart,
Eyther for want of better *Ground* or *Heart*.

Cauſe

Cause from his expectation I did vary
In the denying of his *Commentary*,
Whereas 'tis knowne I meant *Abuse* the while,
Not thinking any *one* could be so vile
To merit all those *Epithites* of shame,
How euer many doe deserue much blame.
But say I grant that I had an intent
To haue it so (as he interprets) meant,
And let my gracious *Liege*, suppose there were
One whom the *State* may haue iust cause to feare,
Or thinke there were a man (and great in *Court*)
That had more faults then I could well report,

Suppose

Suppose I knew him, and had gone about
By some particular markes to paint him out,
That *he* best knowing his owne faults, might see
He was the *Man* I would should noted be,
Imagine now such doings in this *Age*,
And that *this man* so pointed at, should rage,
Call me in question, and by his much threating,
By long imprisonment, and ill intreating,
Vrge a *Confession*; were it not a mad part
For me to tell *him* what lay in my heart?
Doe not I know a great mans *Power* and *Might*,
In spight of *Innocence*, can smother *Right*,

I Colour

Colour his *Villanies*, to get eſteeme,
And make the *honeſt man* the *Villaine* ſeeme?
And that the truth I told ſhould in concluſion,
For want of *Power* and *Friends*, be my confuſion?
I know it, and the world doth know 'tis true;
Yet I proteſt, if ſuch a man I knew,
That might my *Country* preiudice, or *Thee*,
Were he the greateſt or the proudeſt *Hee*
That breathes this day: (if ſo it might be found,
That any good to *either* might redound)
Sor re I'le be (though *Fate* againſt me runne)
From ſtarting off from that I haue begunne,

A Satyre.

I vn-appalled dare in ſuch a caſe
Rip vp his fouleſt *Crimes* before his face,
Though for my *labour* I were ſure to drop
Into the mouth of *Ruine* without hope.
But ſuch ſtrange farre-fetcht meanings they haue (ſought,
As I was neuer priuie to in thought:
And that vnto particulars would tye
Which I intended vniverſally.
Whereat *ſome* with diſpleaſure ouer-gone,
Thoſe I ſcarce dream'd of, ſaw, or thought vpon,
Maugre thoſe caueats on my *Satyres* brow,
Their honeſt and iuſt paſſage diſallow.

And

And on their heads so many censures rake,
That (spight of *me*) themselues they'le guilty make.
Nor is't enough to swage their discontent,
To say *I am* (or to be) *innocent*;
For as, when once the *Lyon* made decree,
No *horned beast* should nigh his presence be,
That, on whose fore-head onely did appeare
A *bunch of flesh*, or but some *tuft of hayre*,
Was euen as farre in danger as the rest,
If he but said, it was a *horned beast*:
So, there be now, who thinke in that their power
Is of much force, or greater farre then our;

It

It is enough to proue a guilt in me,
Becauſe (miſtaking) they ſo think't to be.
Yet 'tis my comfort, they are not ſo high,
But they muſt ſtoope to *Thee* and *Equitie*.
And this I know, though prickt, they ſtorme agen,
The world doth deeme them ne're the better men.
To ſtirre in filth makes not the ſtench the leſſe,
Nor doth Truth *feare the frowne of* Mightineſſe.
Becauſe thoſe numbers ſhe doth deigne to grace,
Men may ſuppreſſe a while, but ne're deface.
I wonder, and 'tis wondred at by many,
My harmeleſſe lines ſhould breed diſtaſte in any:

So

And ſo, that (whereas moſt *good men* approue
My labour, to be worthy thankes, and loue)
I as a *Villaine*, and my *Countryes foe*,
Should be impriſon'd, and ſo ſtrictly to,
That not alone my liberty is barr'd,
But the reſort of friends (which is more hard.)
And whilſt each wanton, or looſe *Rimers* Pen,
With oylie words, ſleekes o're the ſinnes of men,
Vayling his wits to euery *Puppets* becke,
Which ere I'le doe, I'le ioy to breake my necke.
(I ſay) while ſuch as they in euery place
Can finde protection, patronage and grace;

If

If any looke on mee, 'tis but a skaunce
Or if I get a fauour, 'tis by chance.
I muſt protect my ſelfe: poore *Truth* and *I*
Can haue ſcarce *one* ſpeake for our *honeſtie*.
Then whereas they can gold and gifts attaine,
Malitious *Hate*, and *Enuy* is my gaine.
And not alone haue here my *Freedome* loſt,
Whereby my *beſt hopes* likely to be croſt:
But haue beene put to more charge in one day
Then all my *Parents* bounties yet will pay.

What I haue done was not for thirſt of *gaine*,
Or out of hope *preferments* to attaine:
Since to contemne them, would more profit me,
Then all the *glories* in the world that be:
Yet they are helps to *Vertue* vs'd aright,
And when they wanting be, ſhe wants her might.
For Eagles mindes we're fit A rauens feather,
To dare, And to be able, ſuit together.

But what is't I haue done ſo worthy blame,
That ſome ſo eagerly purſue my fame?

A Satyre.

Vouchsafe to view't with thine owne eyes, and try
(Saue want of *Art*) what fault thou canst espy.
I haue not sought to scandalize the State,
Nor sowne sedition, nor made publike hate:
I haue not aym'd at any good mans fame,
Nor taxt (directly) any one by name.
I am not hee that am growne discontent
With the Religion, or the Gouernment.
I meant no Ceremonies to protect,
Nor doe I fauour any new-sprung Sect;

But to my Satyres *gaue this onely warrant,*
To apprehend and punish Vice *apparant.*
Who ayming in particular at none,
In generall vpbraided euery one?
That each (vnshamed of himselfe) might view
That in himselfe, which no man dares to shew.
And hath this *Age* bred vp neat *Vice* so tenderly,
She cannot brooke it to be touch'd so slenderly?
Will she not bide my gentle *Satyres* bites?
Harme take her then, what makes she in their sights?

If with impatience ſhee my *Whip-cord* feele,
How had ſhe raged at my laſh of *Steele?*
But am I call'd in queſtion for her cauſe?
Is't *Vice* that theſe afflictions on me drawes?
And need I now thus to Apologize,
Onely becauſe I ſcourged *Villanies?*
Muſt I be faine to giue a reaſon why,
And how I dare allow of *Honeſty?*
Whilſt that each fleering *Paraſite* is bold
Thy Royall brow vndaunted to behold:

And euery *Temporizer* ſtrikes a ſtring,
That's Muſicke for the hearing of a King?
Shall not *he* reach out to obtaine as much,
Who dares more for thee then a hundred ſuch?
Heauen grant her patience, *my* Muſe *takes't ſo badly*,
I feare ſhee'le loſe her wits, for ſhee raues madly:
Yet let not my *dread Soueraigne* too much blame her,
Whoſe awfull preſence, now hath made her tamer.
For if there be no *Fly* but hath her ſpleene,
Nor a poore *Piſmire*, but will wreake her teene;

How

How ſhall I then, that haue both ſpleene and gall,
Being vniuſtly dealt with, beare with all?
I yet with *patience* take what I haue borne,
And all the worlds enſuing hate can *ſcorne*:
But 'twere in mee as much ſtupiditie,
Not to haue feeling of an iniurie,
As it were weakneſſe not to brooke it well:
What others therefore thinke I cannot tell;
But hee that's leſſe then *madde*, is more then *Man*,
Who ſees when hee hath done the beſt he can,

A Satyre.

To keepe within the bounds of *Innocence*:
Sought to discharge his due to *God*, and *Prince*,
That he, whilſt *Villanies* vnreproued goe,
Scoffing, to see him ouer-taken so,
Should haue his *good endeauours* misconceiu'd,
Be of his *deareſt liberty* bereau'd;
And which is worſe, without reaſon why,
Be frown'd on by *Authorities* grim eye.
By that great Power *my ſoule ſo much doth feare,*
She ſcornes the ſtearn'ſt frownes of a mortall Peere,

But

But that I *Vertue* loue, for her owne ſake,
It were enough to make me vndertake
To ſpeake as much in praiſe of *Vice* agen,
And practiſe ſome to plague theſe *ſhames of men.*
I meane thoſe my *Accuſers*, who miſtaking
My aymes, doe frame conceits of their owne making.
But if I liſt, I need not buy ſo deere
The iuſt *reuenge* might be inflicted here.
Now could *meaſures* frame in this iuſt fury,
Should ſooner finde ſome guilty then a *Iury*:

Whoſe

A Satyre.

The *words*, like *swords* (temper'd with *Art*) should pierce
And hang, and draw, & quarter them in verse.
Or I could racke them on the wings of *Fame*,
(*And hee's halfe hang'd* (they say) *hath an ill name,*)
Yea, I'de goe neere to make those guilty Elues,
Lycambes-like, be glad to hang themselues,
And though this *Age* will not abide to heare
The faults reprou'd, that *Custome* hath made deare.
Yet if I pleased, I could write their *crimes*,
And pile them vp in wals for after-times:

For

For they'le be glad (perhaps) that ſhall enſue,
To ſee ſome ſtory of their Fathers true.
Or ſhould I ſmother'd be in darkneſſe ſtill,
I might not vſe the freedome of a quill:
'Twould raiſe vp *brauer ſpirits* then mine owne,
To make my cauſe, & this their guilt more knowne.
Who by that ſubiect ſhould get Loue and Fame,
Vnto my foes diſgrace and endleſſe ſhame:
Thoſe I do mean, whoſe *Comments* haue miſ-vs'd me,
And to thoſe Peeres I honour, haue accus'd me:

Making

Making againſt *my Innocence* their batteries,
And wronging *them* by their baſe flatteries:
But of reuenge I am not yet ſo faine,
To put my ſelfe vnto that needleſſe paine:
Becauſe I know a greater *Power* there is;
That noteth ſmaller iniuries then this,
And being ſtill as iuſt as it is ſtrong,
Apportions due reuenge for euery wrong.
But why (ſome ſay) ſhould his too ſaucy Rimes
Thus taxe the wiſe and great ones of our times?

A Satyre.

It ſuites not with his yeeres to be ſo bould,
Nor fits it vs by him to be contrould.
I muſt confeſſe ('tis very true indeede)
Such ſhould not of my cenſure ſtand in neede,
But blame me not, I ſaw good *Vertue* poore,
Deſert, among the moſt, thruſt out of doore,
Honeſty hated, *Courteſie* baniſhed,
Rich men exceſſiue, *poore men* famiſhed:
Coldneſſe in *Zeale*, in *Lawes* partialitie,
Friendſhip but *Complement*, and vaine *Formalitie*,

Art

Art I perceiue contemn'd, while most aduance
(To offices of worth) *Rich Ignorance.*
And those that should our *Lights* and *Teachers* be,
Liue (if not worse) as wantonly as wee.
Yea, I saw *Nature* from her course runne backe,
Disorders grow, *Good Orders* goe to wracke.
So to encrease what all the rest beganne,
I to this current of *confusion* ranne.
And seeing Age, left off the place of guiding,
Thus plaid the saucy wagge, and fell to chiding.

Wherein

Wherein, how euer ſome (perhaps) may deeme,
I am not ſo much faulty as I ſeeme;
For when the *Elders* wrong'd *Suſanna's* honour,
And none withſtood the Shame they laid vpon her,
A *Childe* roſe vp to ſtand in her defence,
And ſpight of wrong confirm'd her *Innocence*:
To ſhew *thoſe muſt not, that good vndertake,*
Straine curt'ſie, who ſhall do't, for manners ſake.
Nor doe I know, whether to mee God gaue
A boldneſſe more then many others haue.

That

A Satyre.

That I might shew the world what shamefull blot
Vertue by her lasciuious *Elders* got.
Nor is't a wonder, as some doe suppose,
My *Youth* so much corruption can disclose,
Since euery day the Sunne doth light mine eyes,
I am informed of new villanies:
But it is rather to be wondred how
I eyther can, or dare be honest now.

And though againe there be some others rage,
That I should dare (so much aboue mine age)

I

Thus

Thus cenſure each degree, both young and old,
I ſee not wherein I am ouer-bold.
For if I haue beene plaine with *Vice* I care not,
There's nought that I know good, & can, & dare not.
Onely this one thing doth my minde deterre,
Euen a feare (through ignorance) to erre.
But oh knew I, what thou would'ſt well approue,
Or might the ſmall'ſt reſpect within thee moue;
So in the ſight of God it might be good,
And with the quiet of my conſcience ſtood:

(As well I know thy true integritie
Would command nothing againſt Pietie,)
There's nought ſo dangerous, or full of feare,
That for my *Soueraignes* ſake I would not dare.
Which good beliefe would it did not poſſeſſe thee;
Prouided ſome iuſt tryall might rebleſſe mee:
Yea, though a while I did endure the gall
Of thy diſpleaſure, in this loathſome thrall.
For notwithſtanding in this *place* I lye
By the command of that *Authoritie*,

Of

Of which I haue ſo much reſpectiue care,
That in my *owne* (and iuſt) defence I feare
To vſe the free ſpeech that I doe intend,
Leaſt *Ignorance*, or *Raſhneſſe* ſhould offend.
Yet is my meaning and my thought as free
From wilfull wronging of thy *Lawes* or *Thee*,
As he to whom thy *Place* and *Perſon's* deareſt,
Or to himſelfe that findes his conſcience cleareſt.
If there be *wrong*, 'tis not my making it;
All the offence is ſome's miſtaking it.

A Satyre.

And is there any Iuſtice borne of late,
Makes thoſe faults mine, which others perpetrate?
What man could euer any Age yet finde,
That ſpent his ſpirits in this thankeleſſe kinde
Shewing his meaning, to ſuch words could tye it,
That none could eyther wrong, or miſ-apply it?
Nay, your owne *Lawes*, which (as you doe intend)
In plain'ſt and moſt effectuall words are penn'd,
Cannot be fram'd ſo well to your intent,
But ſome there be will erre from what you meant.

And

And yet (alas) I muſt be ty'de vnto
What neuer any man before could doe?
Muſt all I ſpeake, or write, ſo well be done,
That none may picke more meanings thence then
Then all the world (I hope) will leaue diſ-vnion,
And euery man become of one opinion.
But ſince ſome may, what care ſo e're we take,
Diuers conſtructions of our Writings make,
The honeſt *Readers* euen will conceaue
The beſt intention's, and all others leaue.

Chiefly in *that*, where I fore-hand proteſt
My meaning euer was the honeſteſt,
And if I ſay ſo, what is he may know
So much as to affirme it was not ſo?
If other men ſo neare my thoughts to ſhow it,
Or is my *heart* ſo open that all know it?
Sure if it were, they would no ſuch things ſee,
As thoſe whereof ſome haue accuſed me.
But I care leſſe how it be vnderſtood,
Because the Heauens know my intent was good.

And if it be ſo, that my too-free *Rimes*
Doe much diſpleaſe the world, and theſe bad times;
Tis not my fault, for had I beene imploy'd
In ſomething elſe, all this had now beene voyd.
Or if the world would but haue granted me
Wealth, or Affayres, whereon to buſie me,
I now vnheard of, peraduenture than,
Had beene as mute as ſome rich *Clergie-man*.
But they are much deceiu'd that thinke my minde
Will ere be ſtill, while it can doing finde,

Or that vnto the world so much it leanes,
As to be curtold for default of meanes.
No, though most be, all *Spirits* are not earth,
Nor suiting with the fortunes of their birth,
My *body*'s subiect vnto many Powers,
But my *soule*'s as free, as is the *Emperours*:
And though to curb herin, I oft assay,
She'le breake int' action spight of durt and clay.
And is't not better then to take this course,
Then fall to study mischiefes, and doe worse?

I say

I ſay ſhe muſt haue action, and ſhe ſhall:
For if ſhe will, how can I doe withall?
And let thoſe that o'er buſie thinke me, know
He made me, that knew why he made me ſo.
And though there's ſome that ſay my thoughts doe (flye
A pitch beyond my ſtates ſufficiencie;
My humble minde, I giue my *Sauiour* thanke,
Aſpires nought yet, aboue my fortunes rancke.
But ſay it did, wil't not befit a man
To raiſe his thoughts as neere *Heau'n* as he can?

Muſt

A Satyre.

Muſt the *free ſpirit* by'de and curbed be
According to the bodies pouerty?
Or can it euer be ſo ſubiect to
Baſe *Change*, to riſe, and fall, as fortunes doe?
Men borne to noble meanes, and vulgar mindes
Enioy their wealth; and there's no Law that bindes
Such to abate their ſubſtance, though their Fates
Want *Braines*, and they *worth*, to poſſeſſe ſuch ſtates.
So God to ſome, doth onely *great mindes* giue,
And little other meanes whereon to liue.

What

What law or conſcience then ſhal make them ſmother
Their *Spirit*, which is their life, more then other
To hate their ſubſtance? ſince if it were confeſt,
That a braue minde could euer be ſuppreſt,
Were't reaſon any ſhould himſelfe deprriue
Of what the whole world hath not power to giue?
For wealth is common, and fooles get it too,
When to giue ſpirit's more then *Kings* can doe.
I ſpeake not this, becauſe I thinke there bee
More then the ordinarieſt gifts in me;

But

A Satyre.

But againſt thoſe, who thinke I doe preſume
On more then doth befit me to aſſume,
Or would haue all, whom *Fortune* barres from ſtore,
Make themſelues wretched, as ſhe makes them poore.
And 'cauſe in other things ſhee is vnkinde,
Smother the matchleſſe bleſſings of their minde?
Whereas (although her fauours doe forſake them)
Their *minds* are richer then the world can make (them.
Why ſhould a good attempt diſgraced ſeem,
Becauſe the perſon is of meane eſteeme?

Vertue's

A Satyre.

Vertue's *a chaſte Queene*, and yet doth not ſcorne
To be embrac'd by him that's meaneſt borne,
Shee is the prop, that *Maieſties* ſupport,
Yet one whom *Slaues* as well as *Kings* may court.
She loueth all that beare affection to her,
And yeelds to any that hath heart to wooe her.
So Vice, *how high ſo e're ſhe be in place,*
Is that which Groomes *may ſpit at, in diſgrace:*
She is a ſtrumpet, and may be abhorr'd,
Yea, ſpurn'd at in the boſome of a *Lord*.

Yet

Yet had I ſpoke her fayre, I had beene free,
As many others of her Louers be.
If her eſcapes I had not chanc'd to tell,
I might haue beene a *villaine*, and done well.
Gotten ſome ſpeciall fauour, and not ſate
As now I doe, ſhut vp within a *grate*.
Or if I could haue hap't on ſome looſe ſtraine,
That might haue pleas'd the wanton Readers vaine
Or but claw'd *Pride*, I now had beene vnblam'd:
(Or elſe at leaſt there's ſome would not haue ſham'd

To plead my cauſe:) but ſee my fatall curſe,
Sure I was eyther mad, or ſomewhat worſe:
For I ſaw *Vices* followers brauely kept,
In *Silkes* they walkt, on beds of *Downe* they ſlept,
Richly they fed, on dainties euermore,
They had their pleaſure, they had all things ſtore,
(Whil'ſt *Vertue* begg'd) yea, fauours had ſo many,
I knew they brook't not to be touch'd of any:
Yet could not I, like other men, be wiſe,
Nor learne (for all this) how to temporize;

But

But muſt (with too much honeſty made blinde)
Vpbraid this loued darling of mankinde;
Whereas I might haue better thriu'd by fayning,
Or if I could not chooſe but be complayning,
More ſafe I might haue rail'd on *Vertue* ſure,
Becauſe her louers and her friends are fewer.
I might haue brought ſome other things to paſſe,
Made *Fidlers Songs*, or *Ballets*, like an Aſſe,
Or any thing almoſt indeede but this,
Yet ſince 'tis thus, I'me glad 'tis ſo amiſſe;

For

Becauſe if I am guilty of a crime,
'Tis that, wherein the beſt of euery time,
Hath beene found faulty (if they faulty be)
That doe reproue *Abuſe* and *Villanie*.
For what I'me taxt, I can examples ſhow,
In ſuch old *Authors* as this ſtate allow.
And I would faine once learne a reaſon why
They can haue kinder vſage here then I.
I muſe men doe not now in queſtion call
Seneca, Horace, Perſeus, Iuuenall,

And ſuch as they? Or why did not that Age
In which they liued, put them in a *Cage?*
If I ſhould ſay that men were iuſter then,
I ſhould neere hand be made vnſay't agen.
And therefore ſure I thinke I were as good
Leaue it to others to be vnderſtood;
Yet I as well may ſpeake as deeme amiſſe,
For ſuch this *Ages* curious cunning is,
I ſcarcely dare to let my heart thinke ought,
For there be ſome will ſeeme to know my thought.

Who may out-face me that I thinke awry,
When there's no witneſſe but my *Conſcience* by.
And then I likely am as ill to ſpeed,
As if I ſpake or did amiſſe indeede.

Yet leaſt thoſe who (perhaps) may malice this,
Interpret alſo theſe few lines amiſſe.
Let them that after *thee* ſhall read or heare,
From a raſh cenſure of my thoughts forbeare.
Let them not mold the ſenſe that this containes
According to the forming of their braines.

Or thinke I dare, or can, here taxe those *Peeres*,
Whose wrongs, their *Honours* to my soule endeares,
(Those by whose lou'd scar'd *Authority*)
I am restrained of my liberty:
For feare there yet may be a man so ill,
To haunt my lines with his blacke *Comment* still,
(In hope my lucke againe may be so good,
To haue my words once rightly vnderstood)
This I protest, that *I doe not condemne*
Ought as vnmeet, that hath beene done by them;

For though my honeſt heart not guilty be
Of the leaſt thought, that may diſparage me,
Yet when *ſuch men* as *I*, ſhall haue *ſuch fate*,
Accuſe me of *ſuch crimes*, to *ſuch a State*,
Till I had meanes my *Innocence* to ſhow,
Their *Iuſtice* could haue done no leſſe then ſo.
Nor haue I ſuch a proud conceited wit,
Or ſelfe-opinion of my knowledge yet,
To thinke it may not be that I haue run
Vpon ſome *Errors* in what I haue done,

A Satyre.

Worthy this punishment which I endure,
(I say I cannot so my selfe assure)
For 'tis no wonder if their *Wisedomes* can
Discouer *Imperfections* in a man
So weake as I, (more then himselfe doth see)
Since my *sight* dull with *insufficiencie*,
In men more graue, and wiser farre then I,
Innumerable *Errors* doth espye,
Which they with all their knowledge I'le be bold,
Cannot (or will not) in themselues behold.

But ere I will *my selfe* accuse my *Song*,
Or keepe a *Tongue* shall doe my *Heart* that wrong,
To say I willingly in what I penn'd,
Did ought that might a *Good mans* sight offend,
Or with my knowledge did insert one word,
That might disparage a true *Honour'd Lord*,
Let it be in my mouth a helplesse sore,
And neuer speake to be beleeued more.
Yet *man* irresolute is, vnconstant, weake,
And doth his purpose oft through frailty breake:

Least therefore I by force hereafter may
Bebrought from this minde, and these words vnsay,
Here to the *World* I doe proclaime before,
If e're my resolution be so poore,
'Tis not the *Right*, but *Might* that makes me doe it;
Yea, nought but *fearefull basenesse* brings me to it,
Which if I still hate, as I now detest,
Neuer can come to harbour in my breast.
Thus my fault then (if they a fault imply)
Is not alone an ill vnwillingly,

But also, might I know it, I intend,
Not onely to acknowledge, but amend:
Hoping that *thou* wilt not be so severe,
To punish me above all other here:
But for m'intents sake, and my love to *Truth*,
Impute my *Errors* to the heate of *Youth*,
Or rather *Ignorance*, then to my *Will*,
Which sure I am was *good*, what e're be *ill*.
And like to him now, in whose place thou art,
What e're the residue be, accept the *Heart*.

A Satyre.

But I grow tedious, and my loue abus'd,
Disturbs my thoughts, and makes my lines confus'd:
Yet pardon me, and daigne a gracious eye
On this my rude, vnfil'd *Apologie*.
Let not the bluntnesse of *my* phrase offend,
Weigh but the *matter*, and not how 'tis *pen'd*,
By these abrupt lines in my iust defence,
Iudge what I might say, for my innocence.
And thinke I more could speake, that here I spare,
Because my power suites not to what I dare.

My

My vnaffected *stile* retaynes (you see)
Her old *Frize Cloake* of young *Rusticitie*,
If others will vse neater tearmes, they may,
Ruder I am, yet lcue as well as they.
And (*though if I would smooth't I cannot do't*)
My humble heart I bend beneath thy foote;
While here my Muse her discontent doth sing
To thee her great *Apollo*, and my *King*:
Emploring thee by that high sacred *Name*,
By *Iustice*, by those *Powers* that I could name;

A Satyre.

By whatsoe're may moue entreate I thee,
To be what thou art vnto all, to me,
I feare it not, yet giue me leaue to pray,
I may haue foes whose power doth beare such sway,
If they but say I'me guilty of offence,
'Twere vaine for me to plead my innocence.
But as the Name of God thou bear'st, I trust
Thou imitat'st him so, in being iust:
That when the right of Truth thou comm'st to scan,
Thou'lt not respect the person of the man:

For if thou doe, then is my hope vndone,
The head-long-way, to ruine I muſt runne.
For whilſt that they haue all the helps which may
Procure their pleaſure with my ſoone decay:
How is it like that I my peace can winne,
When all the wyde I haue, comes from within me?
Therefore *(good King)* that mak'ſt thy bounty ſhine
Sometime on thoſe whoſe worth is ſmall as mine,
Oh ſaue me now from Enuies *dangerous ſhelfe,*
Or make me able, and I'le ſaue my ſelfe.

Let

A Satyre.

Let not the want of that make me a ſcorne,
To which there are more *Fooles* then *Wiſe-men* borne.
Let me not for my *Meanneſſe* be diſpis'd,
Nor others *greatneſſe* make their words more priz'd.
For whatſoe're my outward *Fate* appears,
My *Soule's* as good, my *Heart* as great as theirs.
My loue vnto my *Country* and to *thee*,
As much as his that more would ſeeme to be.
And would this Age allow but meanes to ſhow it,
Thoſe that miſdoubt it, ſhould ere long time know it.

A Satyre.

Pitty my youth then, and let me not lye
Wasting my time in fruitlesse misery.
Though I am meane, I may be borne vnto
That seruice which another cannot doe.
In vaine the little Mouse the Lyon spar'd not,
She did him pleasure when a greater dar'd not.
If ought that I haue done, doe *thee* displease,
Thy misconceiued wrath I will appease,
Or sacrifice my heart; but why should I
Suffer for God knowes whom, I know not why?

If

If that my words through *some* mistake offends,
Let them conceiue them right, and make amends.
Or were I guilty of offence indeede,
One fault (they say) *doth but one pardon needs*,
Yet one I had, and now I want one more:
For once I stood accus'd for this before.
As I remember I so long agon,
Sung *Thame*, and *Rhynes Epithalamion*,
When SHEE that from thy Royall selfe deriues
Those gracious vertues that best *Titles* giues:

 She

She that makes *Rhine* proud of her excellence,
And me oft minde her reuerence;
Daign'd in her *great good-nature* to encline
Her gentle eare to such a cause as mine;
And which is more, vouchsaf'd her word, to cleare
Me from all dangers (if there any were)
So that I doe not now intreat, or sue
For any great boone, or request that's new:
But onely this, (though absent from the Land)
Her former fauour still in force might stand:

And that her word (who present was so deere)
Might be as powerfull, as when she was heere.
Which if I finde, and with thy fauour may
Haue leaue to shake my loathed *bands* away
(As I doe hope I shall) and be set free
From all the troubles, this hath brought on me,
Ile make her *Name* giue life vnto a *Song*,
Whose neuer-dying note shall last as long
As there is eyther *Riuer*, *Groue* or *Spring*,
Or *Downe*, for *Sheepe*, or *Shepheards Lad* to sing.

Yea,

Yea, I will teach my *Muse* to touch a ſtraine,
That was ne're teach't nor yet by any Swaine.
For though but many deeme my yeeres vnripe,
Yet I haue learn'd to tune an Oaten Pipe,
Whereon I'le try what muſicke I can make me,
(vntill *Bellona* with her Trumpe awake me.)
And ſince the world will not haue *Vice* thus ſhowne,
By blazing *Vertue* I will make it knowne.
Then if the *Court* will not my lines approue,
I'le goe vnto ſome *Mountaine*, or thicke *Groue*:

There to my fellow *Shepheards* will I ſing,
Tuning my *Reede* vnto ſome dancing *Spring*,
In ſuch a note, that none ſhould dare to trouble it,
Till the *Hils* anſwere, and the *Woods* redouble it,
And peraduenture I may then goe neare
To ſpeake of ſomething thou'lt be pleas'd to heare:
And that which *theſe* who now my tunes abhorre,
Shall reade, and like, and daigne to loue me for:
But the meane while, oh paſſe not this ſuite by,
Let thy *free hand* ſigne me my *liberty*.

And if my loue may moue thee more to do,
Good King conſider this my trouble to.
Others haue found thy fauour in diſtreſſe,
Whoſe loue to thee and thine I thinke was leſſe.
And I might fitter for thy *ſeruice* liue
On what would not be much for *thee* to giue.
And yet I aske it not for that I feare
The outward meanes of life ſhould faile me here:
For though I want to compaſſe thoſe *good ends*
I ayme at for my *Country* and my *Friends*,

A Satyre.

In this *poore ſtate* I can as well content me,
As if that I had *Wealth* and *Honours* lent me;
Not for my *owne ſake* doe I ſeeke to ſhunne
This *thraldome*, wherein now I ſeeme vndone:
For though I prize my *Freedome* more then *Gold*,
And vſe the meanes to free my ſelfe from hold,
Yet with a minde (I hope) vnchang'd and free,
Here can I liue, and play with miſery:
Yea, in deſpight of want and ſlauery,
Laugh at the world in all her brauery,

Here

A Satyre.

Here haue I learn'd to make my greateſt Wrongs
Matter of Mirth, *and ſubiects but for* Songs,
Here can I ſmile to ſee my ſelfe neglected,
And how the meane mans ſute is diſreſpected,
Whil'ſt thoſe that are more rich, and better friended,
Can haue twice greater faults *thrice ſooner ended.*
All this, yea more, I ſee and ſuffer to,
Yet liue content midſt diſcontents I do.
Which whil'ſt I can, it is all one to me,
Whether in *Priſon* or *abroad* it be:

A Satyre.

For ſhould I ſtill lye here *diſtreſt* and *poore*,
It ſhall not make me breathe a ſigh the more;
Since to my ſelfe it is indifferent
Where the ſmall remnant of my dayes be ſpent,
But for *Thy* ſake, my *Countreys*, and my *Friends*,
For whom, more then my ſelfe, *God* this life lends,
I would not, could I helpe it, be a ſcorne,
But (if I might) liue free, as I was borne:
Or rather for my Miſtris *vertues* ſake,
Fayre Vertue, of whom moſt account I make,

If

A Satyre.

If I can chuſe, I will not be debas'd,
In this laſt action, leaſt She be diſgrac'd:
For 'twas the loue of her that brought me to
What *Spleene* nor *Enuy* could not make me do,
And if her *ſeruants* be no more regarded,
If enemies of *Vice* be thus rewarded,
And I ſhould alſo *Vertues* wrongs conceale,
And if none liu'd to whom ſhe dar'd appeale:
Will they that doe not yet her *worth* approue,
Be euer drawne to entertaine her *loue*,

When

When they shall see him plagu'd as an *Offender*,
Who for the loue he beares her, doth commend her?
This may to others more offensiue be,
Then preiudiciall any way to me:
For who will his endeauours euer bend
To follow her, whom there is none will friend?
Some I doe hope there be that nothing may
From loue of *Truth* and *Honesty* dismay.
But who will (that shall see my euill *Fortune*)
The *remedy* of *Times Abuse* importune?

Who will againſt, when they haue ſmother'd me,
Dare to oppoſe the force of *Tullany*?
Whereas he muſt be faine to vndertake
A *Combat* with a ſecond *Lernean* Snake,
Whoſe riſer-growing heads (when as he crops,
Not only two ſprings, for each one he lops,
But alſo he ſhall ſee in midſt of dangers,
Thoſe hee, though *friends* turne *foes*, at leaſt wiſe *strangers*.
More I could ſpeake, but ſure if this doe faile me,
I neuer ſhall doe ought that will auaile me,

Nor

Nor care to ſpeake againe, vnleſſe it be
To him that knowes how *heart* and *tongue* agree,
No, nor to liue, when none dares vndertake
To ſpeake one word for honeſt *Vertues* ſake,
But let *his will be done*, that beſt knowes what
Will be my *future* good, and what will not.
Hap *well* or *ill*, my ſpotleſſe *meaning's* fayre,
And for *thee* this ſhall euer be my prayer,
That thou maiſt here enioy *a long-bleſt Raigne,*
And dying, be in Heauen recrown'd againe.

So

A Satyre.

SO now, if thou haſt daign'd my *Lines* to heare,
There's nothing can befall *me* that I feare:
For if *thou* haſt compaſsion on my trouble,
The *Ioy* I ſhall receiue will be made double;
And if I fall, it may ſome *Glory* be,
That none but IOVE *himſelfe did ruine me.*

Your MAIESTIES
moſt loyall Subiect
and yet Priſoner
in the Marſhalſey,

GEO: WYTHER.